

The Red Mole

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Peace Plan

1. The United States will respect the independence, sovereignty, unification and territorial integrity of Vietnam.

No one could disagree with that, but we should understand that it doesn't mean very much in concrete terms.

2. Twenty-four hours after the agreement is signed all bombing and mining of North Vietnam will end and a ceasefire will take effect in South Vietnam. All American and Allied troops will be withdrawn within 60 days.

This represents the most significant advance for the Indochinese revolutionaries as it gives them a badly-needed breathing space and enables them to regroup and strengthen the liberation forces. It should be recalled that Thieu's army was only saved from complete and total disaster by massive bombing raids and the blockade.

3. After signing, steps will be taken for the immediate return of prisoners of war held by both sides.

The Vietnamese have argued that all political prisoners in South Vietnam are "prisoners of war" and provided this definition is adhered to it further weakens the limited credibility of the puppet apparatus.

4. At ceasefire, the two administrations in South Vietnam (the puppet Thieu regime and the PRG) will negotiate with each other to set up elections for a national coalition government. The two administrations will also negotiate with each other on disposition and reduction of the troops on each side.

This is the most tricky and ambiguous of the proposals and therefore the most important. How the apparatus of the puppet regime is finally destroyed is an extremely important question and the above clause avoids the issue. It is obvious, however, that a situation of dual power cannot last indefinitely. Given the balance of forces the liberation army is placed in a very strong position after the withdrawal of imperialist and allied personnel.

5. Unification of North and South Vietnam will be realised gradually by peaceful means

Fine. Of course a prerequisite being that the question of power will have been resolved in the South prior to reunification.

6. An international committee on military control and supervision will be formed, and an international conference on Vietnam will be called within 30 days of the signing of the peace agreement.

Without any further details on this point it is not possible to make any comments, but the functioning of the International Control Commission set up by the Geneva Conference in 1954 shows that these bodies are useless.

7. The sovereignty and neutrality of Cambodia and Laos will be recognised by all parties in the Vietnam war. The United States will end all military activities in Laos and Cambodia, withdraw all troops, and not reintroduce troops or weapons into Laos and Cambodia.

An important gain as the tottering puppet regimes in Cambodia and Laos would collapse overnight without American air support.

8. Ending of the war will create conditions for establishment of relations between the United States and North Vietnam under which the United States will contribute to reconstruction in North Vietnam and throughout all Indochina.

The United States should be forced to pay in reparations the same amount which they have spent on prosecuting the war. This would amount to 140 billion dollars.

9. The peace agreement will take effect immediately on being signed by North Vietnam and the United States.

Good.

INDOCHINA VICTORY IN SIGHT

The broadcast by Hanoi radio on 26th October shows that the fate of the revolution has been the subject of serious negotiations.

Unfortunately, many militants will substitute their own moods and impressions for a clear analysis of the terms of agreement and of the balance of forces in Indo-China. Some childish people regard any negotiations as a sell-out, while others have been overwhelmed by the scale of U.S. bombing, the betrayals of Moscow and Peking and the weight of bourgeois propaganda claiming that the NLF has been defeated. They will see agreement as a mark of that defeat.

The Indo-Chinese people have indeed been terribly isolated during recent months. Small wonder that the Hanoi paper, *Nhan Dan*, wrote recently in a tone of suppressed fury: "The vitality of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism shows itself first of all in revolutionary deeds, not in empty words. Compared to capitalist nationalism and national selfishness, proletarian internationalism is like light compared to darkness. The road to revolution is full of fragrant grass and flowers; opportunism is a stinking swamp."

But the last few months have also seen the smashing of Nixon's "Vietnamisation" policy, leaving nothing but American fire-power to save the puppet regime from disaster. Secondly, the North Vietnamese offensive in the northern region has enabled the NLF to rebuild its power in the politically decisive Mekong Delta and around Saigon. The situation in Laos and Cambodia is also now extremely favourable to the revolutionary forces. In other words, in spite of the criminal betrayals by Brezhnev and Mao, there is a regime of dual power in Indo-China which can rapidly disintegrate the puppet regimes once U.S. military support is withdrawn. Finally, a first analysis of the agreement terms suggests that it is the Americans who have substantially modified



their positions and not the Provisional Revolutionary Government.

CENTRAL QUESTION

Nevertheless, the PRG's demands evade the central question: deciding the fate of the revolution which, as the theoretical organ of the Vietnamese Workers' Party, *Hoc Tap*, explains, is "a violent overthrow of the bourgeois state apparatus from top to bottom, which can ensure the real subordination of the whole class of exploiters." This means that the victory of the revolution requires the smashing of the puppet armies in Indo-China. *Hoc Tap* goes on to show the futility of

imagining that the state can be smashed via 'democratic elections': "Revisionists in the past as in the present have made great efforts to sing the praises of the bourgeois parliamentary system. They have made a big fanfare about the entry of socialism through the 'parliamentary road'. As a matter of fact democratic rights under the bourgeois parliamentary system are, as Marx put it, nothing more than the right to decide once every three or five years who from the ruling classes should 'represent' the people in parliament and oppress them."

Provided that the smashing of the bourgeois state apparatuses in Indo-China — in other words the puppet armies — is only temporarily delayed to encourage a rapid withdrawal of all imperialist forces, there is nothing to fear. But if any semi-permanent place is given to the clique of puppet generals in a coalition government this could imperil the revolution and demoralise the mass movement.

The handling of these problems will decide whether Ho Chi Minh's prophesy comes true and the locust succeeds both in disembowelling the elephant and in cleansing Indo-China of the filth it leaves behind.

**FOR THE IMMEDIATE WITHDRAWAL OF ALL IMPERIALIST TROOPS FROM INDO-CHINA!
ALL POWER TO THE P.R.G.!
FOR A UNITED AND SOCIALIST VIETNAM!**

IMG. LAUNCHES DRIVE FOR WEEKLY - SPECIAL TROTSKY SUPPLEMENT

A.I.L. BUILDS UP TO NOV. 12th

As the Anti-Internment League enters the last month of preparation for the November 12th demonstration, the signs so far are encouraging, with AIL activity at a local level on the increase.

On Sunday last, the Tory gauleiter for Ireland, Whitelaw, was forced to slip into the BBC's Lime Grove Studios through a side entrance when a 27 strong flying-picket surrounded the main entrance. The picket was organised by Kilburn AIL, and supported by members of Kilburn Sinn Fein, Clann na hEireann and the International Marxist Group.

In Liverpool, a new branch is being founded following a teach-in at the university on 20 October addressed by Gus Fagan of Oxford AIL. In the Coventry area, Warwick University branch has helped to form a new branch in Coventry following a series of well attended public meetings in the area,

and a two-day picket of Owen Owen's department store against a 45th Royal Marine Commando display. York AIL held a public meeting on Wednesday to start mobilising for the demo. Between now and 12 November they plan to have two more meetings plus a special issue of their magazine, *Ireland Now*. Reading AIL have a demo planned from Prospect Park this Saturday at 2.30 p.m.

Meanwhile the committee of the AIL has decided in principle to book a hall for a rally at the end of the November 12th demonstration.

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**ANTI-INTERMENT LEAGUE
NOVEMBER DEMONSTRATION**

Sunday, 12 November - assemble Speakers' Corner, Hyde Park, at 2.00 p.m.

Brian Slocock and Bob Williams look at

THE POLITICS OF INCOMES POLICY

The last few months have been a bewildering experience for people who look at politics in the same way as Vic Feather and his colleagues in the TUC. Mr. Feather has always believed that people should examine policies "on their merits"—i.e. in isolation from the class struggle—but that in general Labour collaborates with the unions while the Tories put through anti-working class policies. However, with Heath's latest proposals Mr. Feather and his friends are thrown into confusion. For Mr. Heath has suggested an incomes and prices policy which appears "better" than anything Labour offered in its years of office.

More than this, some of the proposals seem to be very similar to what the TUC itself was arguing for over the last couple of years—threshold agreements, a priority for high growth rates, help for the lower paid through flat rate limits instead of percentage limits on wage increases, a voluntary approach, and lots of cosy consultations with the TUC. The Tories seem to have changed their spots over-night. Suddenly, they have had a change of heart and are now being reasonable—that must be the view of everybody who looks at politics in the traditional social democratic manner. Mr. Kaldor, painted in the most bloodthirsty shade of red by the capitalist press when he was Wilson's economic adviser in the 1960s, has said as much: he has declared that Mr. Heath is introducing socialist measures of a more left wing variety than anything that the Labour Government dreamed of!

Hospital Workers Prepare To Fight

By MIKE FITZGERALD

Hospital ancillary workers, amongst the lowest paid and least well organised, are preparing to smash any deal concocted by the TUC and the Government. Strikes by T&G hospital branches in Bristol and Gloucester earlier this month have sent ripples of militancy through hospitals up and down the country and the Bristol demand for £8 backed up by threat of strike action has been taken up by workers in Manchester, Basingstoke, Exeter, and Wales. In London an Alliance of Stewards for Health Workers (L.A.S.H.) has been set up for this purpose.

Union leaders (T&G, G&M, NUPE, and COHSE) are going to the negotiating table on 27 October with a miserable claim of £4, which for many workers whose take home pay is only £14 will barely restore their real earnings of 1970, let alone take them off the bottom of the wages ladder (127th out of 129). Union officials justify this treachery by saying they had no indication that their members would back up a better claim. But militants from all over the country will be outside Alexandra Fleming House (venue of negotiations) on Friday to call their bluff. In reality the official claim was only as high as £4 on the basic rate because the inefficient N.H.S. management have not yet been able to come up with the productivity deals so eagerly awaited by the officials.

The recent token strikes have had the important effect on ancillary workers of proving to them they can take industrial action which rapidly causes chaos in hospitals without endangering patients' lives. Thus the management's cynical exploitation of workers' devotion to the patients to maintain appalling wages and conditions will no longer work. But we can still expect "public opinion" to be whipped up by hysterical propaganda from government and the mass media. To counteract this it is vital that other health workers do not scab and the real public, i.e. trade unionists, students, etc. give them meaningful support. In particular local authority and power workers who are about to take action must unite with their more vulnerable brothers and sisters in the hospitals.

NOTE

T&G: Transport and General Workers Union.
G&M: General and Municipal Workers Union.
NUPE: National Union of Public Employees.
COHSE: Confederation of Health Service Employees.

But since the start of the socialist movement in this country there has been another way of looking at politics: the view that politics is really a struggle between different social forces not different cabinets and policies, a struggle between classes whose interests are diametrically opposed to each other. Those in the Labour movement who see the situation from this point of view come to exactly the opposite conclusions from those of Mr. Feather and his friends. They relate the latest move by the Tory Government to the needs of the British capitalist class in its fight against rival bourgeoisies abroad and against the working class at home. And the conclusion is that Heath's present proposals are absolutely consistent with the aims his Government has been pursuing over the last two years. They simply represent a new tactic for achieving those aims, a tactic necessitated by the changed relation of forces between the classes in the last year and by lessons the Government has learnt from its recent defeats in the class struggle.

As *The Red Mole* and other papers of the revolutionary left have been pointing out for a long time, the Government (and any government which accepts the capitalist economic system) has to inflict a decisive defeat on the fighting strength of the working class in order to revive the ailing fortunes of British capitalism. Without such a revival, the capitalist class will not be able to compete with its rivals in the Common Market, the U.S. and Japan. The problem has been how to defeat the working class while at the same time maintaining the smooth running of the economy? It is here that the Government has changed course: in the field of tactics, not aims. And it has changed its tactics because it has been forced to recognise the realities of the class struggle over the last year.

HEATH'S DILEMMA

There are basically two ways in which the Government can attack the working class. They can either go for a head-on, frontal assault, trying to smash workers wherever they go into struggle and force them to obey government diktats and Acts of Parliament destroying previous gains and rights; or else they can manoeuvre, making alliances of a temporary nature with sections of the working class or more likely with the trade union bureaucracy, and thus being able to pick off the most class conscious groups of workers one by one, preparing the way for a future frontal assault.

When the Government first came to office it tried the first tactic, frontal assault, smashing into the postal workers, the UCS workers, pushing through the Industrial Relations Act and so on. But the miners' strike and the freeing of the five as well as many other less spectacular examples of the fighting spirit of the working class, have forced the Government to change tactics and buy time. It is now going for a policy of manoeuvre and alliance with the

more backward sections of the working class, trying to persuade them to put their trust in the State to solve the problem of low pay and rising prices.

The big problem for the Government is that political success in winning over backward sections of the working class requires a period of cautious manoeuvring and kid gloves, while the economic interests of the capitalists require a sharp fight to hold down wage increases. A gulf is opening up between the Government's political tactics and the ruling class's economic needs. The incomes policy proposals are a desperate attempt to bridge that gap. Privately, according to the *Financial Times*, the Government is worried sick about its prospects this winter.

But Heath has one great hope: Vic Feather and the TUC. If he can win them over or at least neutralise them then he hopes to be able to smash into workers in struggle for higher pay with some hope of winning 'public opinion' to his side. Union bashing would have official TUC backing. A few resounding victories on the pay front and the government could rapidly move onto a general offensive bringing the Industrial Relations Act, the special police anti-strike squads, etc. down on the working class. Even now the government has gained a lot from the TUC since the general council has accepted the principle of the incomes policy, and is simply haggling over the price.

THE WORKING CLASS ALTERNATIVE

Propaganda for socialism alone will not defeat the Government's tactics. Nor will agitation against the iniquities of the Tories. The task for socialist militants is to offer a practical solution to those problems which the government is trying to exploit to divide the working class. The Government's task is to demonstrate to the less strongly organised sections of working people that the only solution to rising prices and low pay is to depend on the capitalist State and to break with the militants. In the last issue of *The Red Mole* we showed how that state prices and incomes policy will mean a cut in the real living standards of most of the working class. Therefore the first task in a socialist counter-strategy is **TO CAMPAIGN FOR THE TUC TO BREAK OFF NEGOTIATIONS AND REJECT ANY DEAL, SINCE THE DEAL WILL MEAN AN ATTACK ON WORKING CLASS LIVING STANDARDS.**

Secondly, militants must expose the ridiculous idea that the people who benefit from price rises should be in charge of holding prices down, and **ORGANISE A CAMPAIGN OF ACTION AGAINST PRICE RISES BY THE PEOPLE WHO SUFFER FROM THEM:** committees of working class housewives, pensioners, unemployed, etc. should be formed with full trade union backing to take action against local businesses and tradesmen who raise prices. Small traders who oppose the price rises of monopoly suppliers should be supported by the unions, and solidarity action should be organised among workers in the industries putting

up prices.

Thirdly, at this moment large sections of workers are moving into dispute over pay rises—the electricity workers are in the front line. Militants must **ORGANISE A MASSIVE CAMPAIGN OF SOLIDARITY WITH ANY SECTION OF WORKERS IN STRUGGLE FOR PAY RISES WHICH EXCEED THE GOVERNMENT NORM.** The solidarity shown during the miners' strike must be repeated and greatly extended in all the coming wage struggles. Every pay struggle must be turned into a battering ram against the Government's whole anti-working class policy.

Fourthly, the principle that the capitalists must pay for price rises should be written into all wage settlements: **THRESHOLDS SHOULD BE THROWN OUT AND REPLACED BY A SLIDING SCALE OF WAGES: AUTOMATIC PAY INCREASES FOR ANY INCREASE IN THE COST OF LIVING.** The cost of living index to be worked out under trade union control.

Fifthly, the unions must take up the struggle for the lower paid: full support should be given for across the board increases which reduce pay differentials; the trade union movement should set a **NATIONAL MINIMUM WAGE** and organise a national struggle to win this national minimum for all those who currently fall below it. The fight for **EQUAL PAY FOR WOMEN** should be taken up in every industry. Claims by higher paid groups of workers should include demands for **SOCIAL BENEFITS—SHORTER HOURS, FREE TRANSPORT, COMPANY SUBSIDISED NURSERY FACILITIES.** Such benefits are gains for the whole work force and cannot be eroded by price rises.

Finally, the question of organisation for the struggle must be tackled as a precondition for success: the trade union bureaucracy cannot be relied upon to organise an effective struggle for a single one of these objectives. And the sharper the fight, the more timid the trade union bosses become. Already in many areas local committees for the defence of trade unions have been set up by rank and file militants. These must be generalised into a national network of **TRADE UNION DEFENCE COMMITTEES** to fight every move by the Government against the working class and prepare the way for a working class counter-attack. In addition support committees should be established in the course of all struggles to organise allies among students, unorganised workers, housewives, pensioners, professionals, etc.

Struggles developed around a programme such as this one would be able to undermine the ideological offensive of the Government against the working-class movement. Such a line up of forces could isolate the Government and make easier a real victory of the working class. Victories such as these would be concrete steps in paving the road to a socialist Britain.



Outside Pentonville Prison—the fighting spirit of the working class, as shown in the freeing of the five, forced the Government to change its tactics

Photo: Serena Wadham

BIG THORNYCROFT'S VOTE TO REJECT DEAL

By PAUL HUNTER

BLMC have made yet another serious error of judgement over the determination of the Thornycroft workers to stand firm in their fight against redundancies. The settlement proposals reached at the 'top-level' talks in York between British-Leyland and the union leaders have been rejected by two mass meetings as providing no basis for a settlement at all. The Basingstoke occupation is now in its third month, and will go on.

So sure were they that the York proposals would bring the occupation to an end, that when production at their A.E.C. Southall plant was forced to a halt (due to the supply of gearboxes drying up), British-Leyland kept on the workers there at full pay for over two weeks. They believed that if the pretence of not laying off the A.E.C. workers could be maintained, then the Thornycroft workers would be discouraged at their lack of success in stopping production elsewhere in the BLMC combine. But with the rejection of these proposals by the Thornycroft workers, there is now clearly a prospect of layoffs, and the A.E.C. workers will have to

decide on how to respond. The main tactic being discussed there is a strike, but an occupation in solidarity with Thornycroft's would be far less divisive and could give a big impetus to the solidarity movement in the rest of the combine.

The York proposals contained nine points, beginning with a statement that the takeover by the Eaton Corporation would be moved back from 1 October, 1972 to 15 January, 1973, and that work would be "guaranteed" for six months for a "balanced workforce of 738 employees" (this would mean several hundred redundancies). Everything that BLMC was to 'concede' was so heavily qualified that nothing was really conceded at all; for instance, BLMC would undertake to place orders with Eaton's, but this would be "subject to market conditions" (i.e. Eaton's gearboxes would have to be cheaper than anyone else's), and again, when new product opportunities arise, "full consideration" will be given to the "possibility" of production in Basingstoke, according to the "circumstances of the case". On the other hand, the chief demand on the unions was quite definite: they must

undertake to end the blacking of Thornycroft and Eaton products.

The fact that the proposals delay the takeover until 15 January, when Eaton's would agree to employ at "prevailing rates and conditions, and in terms of existing collective agreements", is, of course, no concession whatever. It simply means that Eaton's are putting the onus on BLMC to 'sort things out' at Thornycroft's before the deal finally goes through.

MEETINGS

The proposals were first put to a meeting, on Sunday, 8 October, of those workers who had been actively involved in the occupation; they were turned down by 312 votes to 8. For organising the meeting this way, however, the occupation committee came under fire; it was alleged that allowing only 'occupying' workers into the meeting amounted to rigging, and that the vote taken was invalid. In answering this charge, Len Smart, the spokesman for the committee, quite correctly said that, "We only allowed those people taking part in the sit-in to attend because these are the people making the sacrifices. Others who have been sitting on their backsides or doing other jobs have done nothing to produce the present improved situation."

The national leadership of the AUEW (the main union of the nine involved) issued a statement saying that the proposals would again be put to the vote, this time at a public meeting in an open place, to be attended by the entire workforce. To this the occupation committee responded by insisting that the meeting must be held inside the factory gates and that only card-carrying trade union members could participate. (This counter-statement was the first one from the committee not to be published in the local paper, the *Southern Evening Echo* - but the meeting did finally take place, on Thursday 12th, as laid down by the committee.)

The eagerness of management and unions alike to secure a quick settlement without satisfactorily meeting any of the demands raised, backfired, for the mass meeting of over 600 workers voted 2 to 1 to reject the proposals and fight on.

The decision of these two meetings has effectively thrown the ball back into the court of BLMC and the union leaderships. The message is clear: we're sitting-in until our demands are met. The experience of the first round of talks at York has hardened resistance to any sell-out cooked up at national level, and the Thornycroft workers have now established the principle that the terms of any settlement will have to be agreed to by themselves.

The mood inside the factory is one of triumph, combined with a will to getting down to practical steps to increase the pressure on BLMC. Flying pickets to other plants in the BLMC combine are being used to explain what is going on at Thornycroft's, to collect funds, and to build up support for solidarity action to be taken.

SUPPORT

Support, both moral and financial, has been coming in, but still only at a trickle compared to what is really necessary; it is coming from other plants in the BLMC combine (over £700 from A.E.C. Southall alone), from local Basingstoke factories, and from student unions (£40 was donated by a union meeting at York University and £100 at Reading together with messages of support). What is still urgently needed, however, is for this support to be translated into concrete action. This is something which rests largely in the hands of the shop stewards in the Bus & Truck division of BLMC.

The Thornycroft workers have told the negotiating committees of their respective unions to go back and negotiate again, and to make sure that they return with the 1000 jobs they are demanding. Inside the occupation morale is high; jokes are already being told about how mince pies will have to be brought in at Christmas, and one worker was heard to say, "If the Fine Tubes workers can stay out for three years, we can stay in for a while longer if we have to."

All cheques, messages of support, etc., should be sent to :-

JOINT UNIONS OCCUPATION COMMITTEE,
The Board Room,
Thornycroft's,
Worting Road,
Basingstoke,
Hants.



Thornycroft workers in York to lobby the talks

THE EUROPEAN SUMMIT

By OLIVER MACDONALD

The European summit produced some high-flown rhetoric about European unity and some energetic attempts to ensure that little or nothing concrete was done to more in that direction. The bourgeois press has sensibly devoted most of its comment to gossip about the relative technical skills of the different leaders. While Peter Shore, the Labour Party's Europe spokesman, adopted the ridiculous posture of pretending that the rhetoric meant what it said and denounced Heath's sell-out of the British Parliament in favour of European institutions.

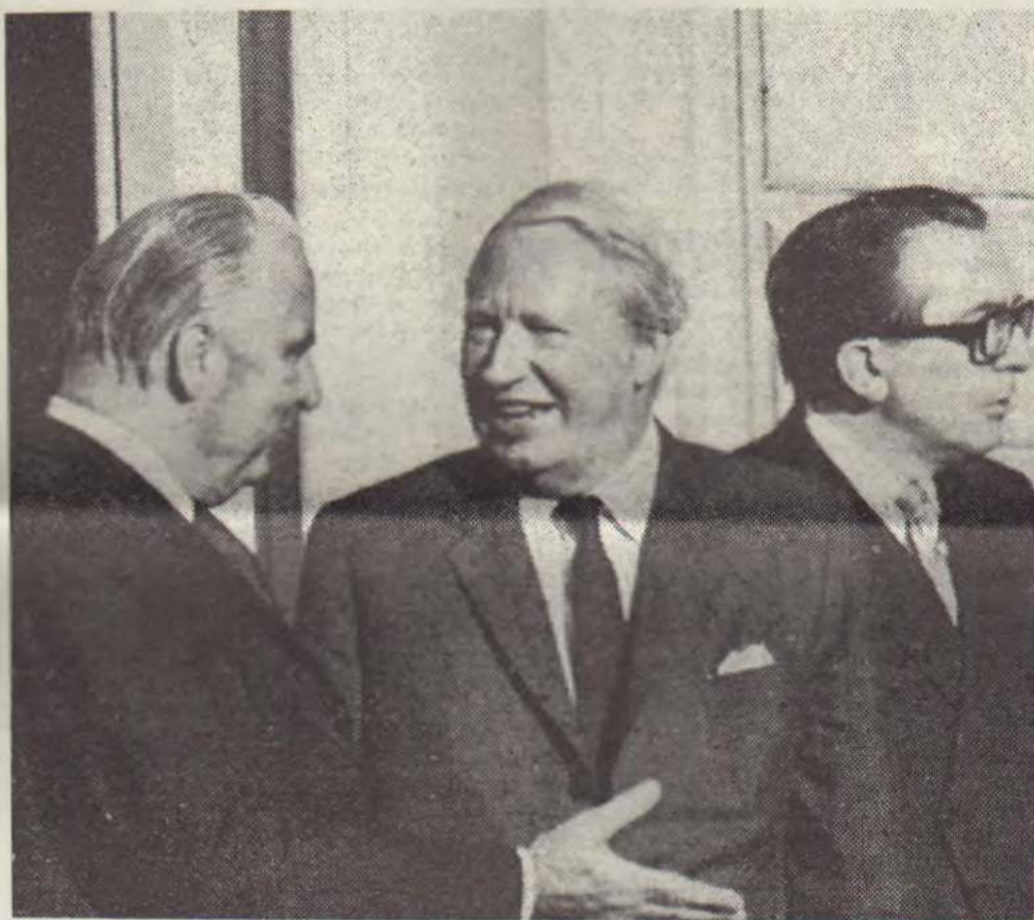
Pompidou had planned the summit in August 1971 as a reply to Nixon's protectionist economic and monetary measures. He no doubt hoped to lead the European counter-attack. But since then a lot of lukewarm water has flowed under the bridges of Europe. The British government has devalued the pound thus harming French and German employers, the German bourgeoisie is irritated by Pompidou's attempts to dominate the scene, and the European capitals have been involved in a dog-fight as to whether the new secretariat should be in Paris or Brussels.

So the summit was given more modest goals: a public relations spectacular for the Prime Ministers of Europe. To be honest many of them needed it. Brandt is close to an election and requires every percentage point he can get to beat the Christian Democrats. Pompidou himself is close to an election with his party divided and shaken by a whole series of public scandals. And our own Prime Minister is hardly a national hero. Lest there should be any misunderstanding, the organisers announced before hand that nothing much was expected from the conference.

THE STAKES

The end of the long capitalist boom and increased international competition demands increased state intervention in the economy. The question of which institutions to rely upon for protection is an increasingly important one for big capital. The alternatives are either to step back from European integration and rely upon national state institutions or to push ahead towards European planning and the creation of a European supra-national power.

In the immediate future this contradiction does not appear insurmountable: economic interests push the big capitals towards unity; but political interests divide them. The interpenetration and concentration of capitals, the intensification of international competition would justify the creation of a federal state, with a huge protected internal market. But the countries whose economies are most fragile, such as France and Britain, would thus be deprived of all customs protection. Small capital, which still occupies an important place in France, would thus be exposed to the risk of rapid bankruptcy. Big capital would emerge from integration strengthened economically, but it could lose the allegiance of social layers which may be indispensable to the maintenance of its political power in the face of



Pompidou, Heath, and Andreotti of Italy at the summit talks

a powerful organised workers' movement.

This unresolved conflict prevented any significant steps forward towards a federal state in Paris: neither close monetary union, nor strong industrial unity, nor the strengthening of the central administrative institutions. Between the perspectives of a federal state and a confederation of the states the weight of contradictions still favours the second.

The revolutionary vanguard in Europe will unify itself more easily and quickly than the state machines of the various countries. The international demonstration in Berlin in 1968, the international conference in Brussels in 1970, and the international demonstration in Paris for the centenary of the Paris Commune in May 1971 are symbolic landmarks of this unification. Today the Fourth International is present in all the European countries. The dismemberment that Stalinism inflicted on the workers movement is drawing to a close.

WORKING CLASS

The working class itself is pushed on by the interpenetration of capital to internationalist action. In September last, Dutch, Belgian and German workers made the giant trust Akzo submit. The trust exploits 100,000 workers. It had forecast the closing of the factory in Breda, Holland and the sacking of 6,000 employees. On 18 September, these workers stopped work and occupied the factory. This is the first occupation in Holland since 1944!

Thanks to the telex, the occupation committee communicated to the other centres

of production the letter that they had just addressed to the management: "From now until a new order, the workers will only accept instructions from the occupation committee". On 20 September, 3000 workers of Akzo at Wuppertal (Germany) replied to the call by going on strike with an occupation. On the 21st Akzo gave way and gave up the idea of sackings.

The precedent is also educating others. International solidarity spread during the recent strike at the PK workshop in Michelin. The workers of Hamburg-Saar in Germany and those of Trento in Italy refused a management request to work overtime to compensate for the strike in Clermont Ferrand. However, the management tried to cover up the strike, pretending a breakdown! The Spanish workers' commissions and the Canadian unions of Michelin have also demonstrated their solidarity.

ONE INTERNATIONAL CLASS RESPONSE

Only the workers' movement can give a fundamental answer to the question of Europe's future. Unhappily the Labour Left is so stuffed with chauvinist and Parliamentary illusions that it is incapable of developing any perspective for an international struggle against European capitalism. To Labour's call to "Defend the British Parliament" and Heath's perspective of a European capitalist federation, we must counter-pose the slogan of the Communist International in the early 1920s: "For the United Socialist States of Europe".

THE POLITICS OF THE S.D.L.P.

By SEAN REED. Second in a series which will also include articles on the Provisional Republicans and P.D.

A major difficulty in analysing the politics of the Social Democratic and Labour Party is that it's not so much a political party, more a way of life for its six M.P.s, each of whom has his own programme, each his own timetable for his own social advancement.

The SDLP, therefore, is a coalition of diverse elements, representing different political positions and individual political bent. These are best explained by describing individually the party's leading members.

But first, to set the record straight, the six SDLP M.P.s were elected in early '69. All of them stood on a different programme from that on which they now stand. With the exception of Hume and Cooper, all of their programmes differed from one another. John Hume and Ivan Cooper were elected as Independents, on the basis of their press-constructed record as young, bright, moderate Civil Rights leaders. Austin Currie was elected as a Nationalist M.P., making desperate overtures to Republicans, and issuing a statement "approving of" the People's Democracy manifesto. Paddy O'Hanlon was a member of an autonomous organisation called Newry People's Democracy, and never in his election propaganda did he disassociate himself from the election programme of People's Democracy.

Gerry Fitt was elected as a member of the Republican Labour Party, on a programme calling for the immediate reunification of Ireland in a Socialist Workers' Republic. Paddy Devlin was elected as a member of the *pro-British* Northern Ireland Labour Party, although he himself has a record of support for the then most militant sections of the Civil Rights movement.

REFLECTION

The election took place at the beginning of the mass upsurge of the Civil Rights movement, and it was a reflection of the political level prevailing at that time. Even then, the total vote the SDLP collected was less than that polled by PD. Despite this, and despite the Party's lack of a coherent programme, the SDLP is projected as the main spokesman for the Catholic minority, through the aid given to them by the British and Irish bourgeois media.

However, as Bob Purdie has pointed out in his pamphlet *Ireland Unfree*, they do not "comply with the Marxist definition of Social Democracy... They do not represent any section of the working class. If they reflect any social milieu at all it is a very small section of the Catholic middle class which has tried to take over the leadership of the Catholic workers."

Having put them in their common setting, it is now necessary to examine each M.P. individually.

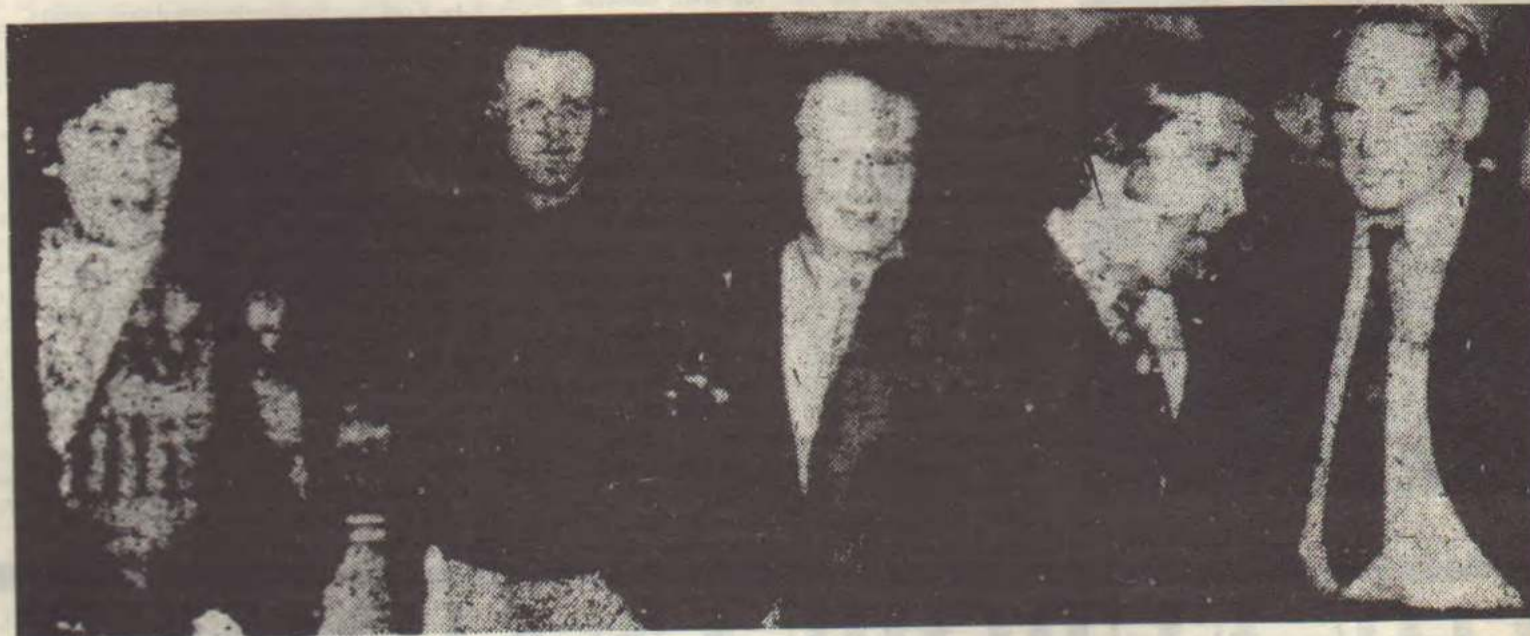
1. John Hume, M.P. for Foyle

As explained above, Hume was elected on the basis of his record as a leader in the early Civil Rights agitation. In the week before the famous October 5th demonstration in 1968 which sparked off the present upsurge in Ireland, the organisers of the march, in order to comply with the law, had to find two signatories to an application form to hold the procession. Hume was approached by the organisers and refused point-blank.

In spite of this, he was projected, mainly by the *Irish Times*, as the man who lit the spark of the Civil Rights movement.

John Hume represents a synthesis of the policy of the Catholic Hierarchy and the newer sections of the Catholic middle-class in the Six-Counties, and the programme of the Southern government for the Six Counties. He has no faith in the ability of the Irish people to carry out a successful armed social revolution against British imperialism. A series of manoeuvres between the IRA and the British on the one hand, and between the British Government and the local Unionist establishment on the other, and inside the Unionist camp, between the *mainstream* unionists, and the *moderate* unionists.

For his manoeuvres, he needs a Catholic



SDLP members John Hume (second from left), Ivan Cooper behind him and, right, Austin Currie after talks with the Whitelaw administration.

mass movement, so that he can present himself as the Fire Brigade Man, extinguishing this upsurge here and another there, according to the tactics of the manoeuvre. This is the strength of his position.

During the bilateral cease-fire between the Republican Army and the British in the summer of this year, Hume was preparing to ditch the SDLP and tie himself to one wing of the Provos. The flexibility displayed then, and shortly afterwards when he jumped off the bandwagon, makes it extremely difficult to write "finis" to Hume's political career. His recent description of Conor Cruise O'Brien's politics as being "a more subtle and effective defence of Unionism than any that has come from any Unionist quarter" has undoubtedly driven a nail into Cruise O'Brien's political coffin. But his disagreement with O'Brien is not, as he himself has said, one of principle. As the *Irish Times* said, editorially, on 16 October, 1972: "O'Brien... and the SDLP are, in fact, saying the same things".

2. Ivan Cooper, M.P. for Mid Derry

Ivan Cooper has in turn been member of the Young Unionists, the Unionists, the Liberals and the Labour Party. He was elected as an Independent M.P. for Mid Derry.

Early this year, Cooper was in Brussels for a day to address a meeting. The meeting was cancelled for lack of attendance, and so, in the company of Eamonn O'Loole, the Free State Embassy Press Officer in Brussels, he sat in on a press conference on Ireland given by the Belgian section of the Fourth International. That same day, Cooper also observed a student demonstration and a mass meeting attended by over 1,500 people, against British imperialism in Ireland.

That night, Cooper flew back to Ireland, announcing that "we (the Irish) had lost the propaganda war in Brussels".

Bernadette Devlin has said of Ivan Cooper that in politics, "Ivan will go anywhere John (Hume) can drag him".

3. Gerry Fitt, Stormont M.P. for Belfast Dock, Westminster M.P. for West Belfast.

When Fitt was first elected, to Westminster, he was asked during a long boring car journey from Dublin to Belfast whether he would sell his principles for a seat in parliament. He replied, "If I ever get any, I'll sell them".

Basically a Ward-Wheeler, his election in the first place represents the historic situation of a large section of the Catholic working class of Belfast, which has become a lumpen proletariat through 50 years of unemployment, squalor and lack of political and social rights. Fitt himself is a lumpen politician, who, when sober, is able to articulate the desires and aspirations of the most deprived section of the Belfast population. When the *Sunday Times* Insight Team wrote their book on Ulster, they mentioned "a leading Opposition M.P." who asked Chichester-Clark, then the Six-Counties Prime Minister, to introduce internment in 1970. Mystery has surrounded the identity of this "leading Opposition M.P." but a book to be published in the New Year

names the man who fits the bill.

Fitt's whole history of small town, small time, small talk politics differentiates him from the "new professionalism" of Hume essentially in this... that he would sell out for a smaller price.

4. Paddy O'Hanlon, M.P. for South Armagh

O'Hanlon was on the dole when he was elected in '69. His main political ambition is never to go back on it. He had acted as election agent for the sitting M.P. Richardson in the previous election. Until the last couple of days before the '69 election, Richardson was assuming that O'Hanlon was to act as his agent in this election, and take care of everything.

When nomination day came, Paddy had taken care of everything. O'Hanlon's name was on the nomination form.

5. Paddy Devlin, M.P. for Falls

Paddy Devlin is an ex-member of the IRA, and an ex-internee. Today he represents a sort of "Parliamentary Connollyism", which embraces the Catholics who are not in principle opposed to the armed struggle, but don't believe it to be necessarily the most favourable road. He works closely with the Officials as shown by his part in the anti-EEC campaign in the South.

Devlin now spends most of his time watching Gerry Fitt and the others, and stopping them from completely breaking their pledge not to enter into a conference until interment is ended.

His experience with right wing Republicans while interned has given him an almost paranoid hatred of the Provos, which makes him easily led into a stampede whenever Fitt and Hume can agree on a direction. In such a situation, Devlin acts as a left cover for the SDLP.

6. Austin Currie, M.P. for East Tyrone

Currie was elected as a Nationalist with, as he said, "PD leanings". In the early days of the Civil Rights movement, he acquired a tremendous amount of publicity. On the second day of the Burntollet march he turned up outside a Republican Hall where the marchers were being fed by local Republicans, and presented a chicken to one of the marchers, in front of a battery of press photographers.

The only times Currie seems to make the news these days is when mysterious shots are fired at his home at regular intervals. This provokes the current East Tyrone joke that shots at Currie's home means that the SDLP must be going to sell someone else out.

In fact the reason for Currie's absence from the headlines is the faction fighting within the SDLP. Currie is able and waiting in the background. He is backing Gerry Fitt for the leadership because he knows that if Fitt goes, Hume will replace him, thus ending for the foreseeable future Austin's hopes of gaining the leadership for himself.

RECENT PLAN

The SDLP recently brought out a plan which called for a British declaration in favour of Irish unity, and meanwhile a

Condominium of the British and Free State governments over the Six Counties.

Basically the plan calls for the joint running of Northern Ireland by Britain and the Free State. This is seen by John Hume as the next great manoeuvre. You get a declaration from Britain that she wants to pull out whenever possible, thus putting a time-limit on the existence of a *separate* Northern State.

Meanwhile security, etc., is jointly shared by the forces which can guarantee bourgeois stability and reform. Under this umbrella, it is presumed that there will be an end to discrimination, and therefore a disintegration of the Orange monolith.

In such a situation the forces of moderation would emerge in the Catholic community, forming a governmental alliance most likely with the Alliance Party, the Northern Ireland Labour Party and possibly the O'Neillites. Thus there is a gradual withering away of the Northern State.

NEAT

The plan is neat. It recalls to mind a verse in an Irish folk song:

"Irishmen forget the past,
And think of the day that's coming fast,
When we shall all be civilized,
Neat and clean and well advised,
Oh won't Mother England be surprised,"

It's too neat. It comes up with the wrong answer, because it starts with the wrong analysis. It acts throughout on the assumption that what has been happening for the last few years is that the Catholics want the Free State to control the Six Counties, and that the Protestants want to maintain the Orange Ascendancy.

As the Derry Officials' paper, *Starry Plough*, says, "the SDLP's 'solution' is to declare the fight a draw and give each side equal share of control".

The two basic things which the plan leaves out are: firstly, the true role of British imperialism in Ireland; and secondly, that what Republicans and socialists have been fighting for *and they are leading the struggle now* is to overthrow not just the Orange State, not just British imperialism, but the Free State as well.

IMPORTANCE

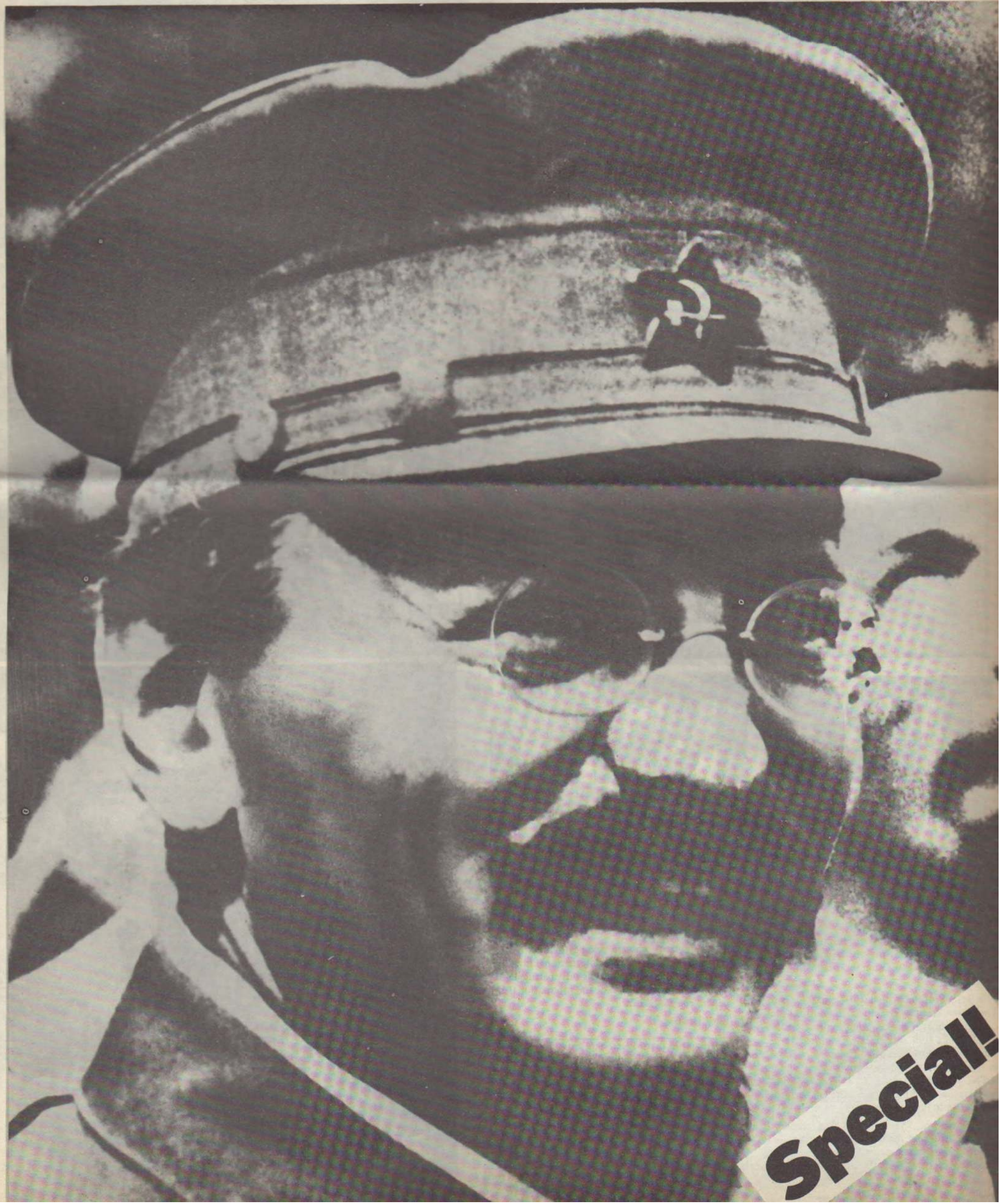
In other words, the plan is founded on the assumption that Britain will first have defeated the IRA, and this fact alone tells us the most important thing about the SDLP.

Although it is wrong to describe them *simply* as Green Tories, and therefore by implication to equate them with the Unionists, they are opponents of the revolutionary struggle which is taking place in Ireland today. Their importance lies in the fact that in the event of a defeat for the IRA, they would act as the Party of Surrender for the oppressed Catholics.

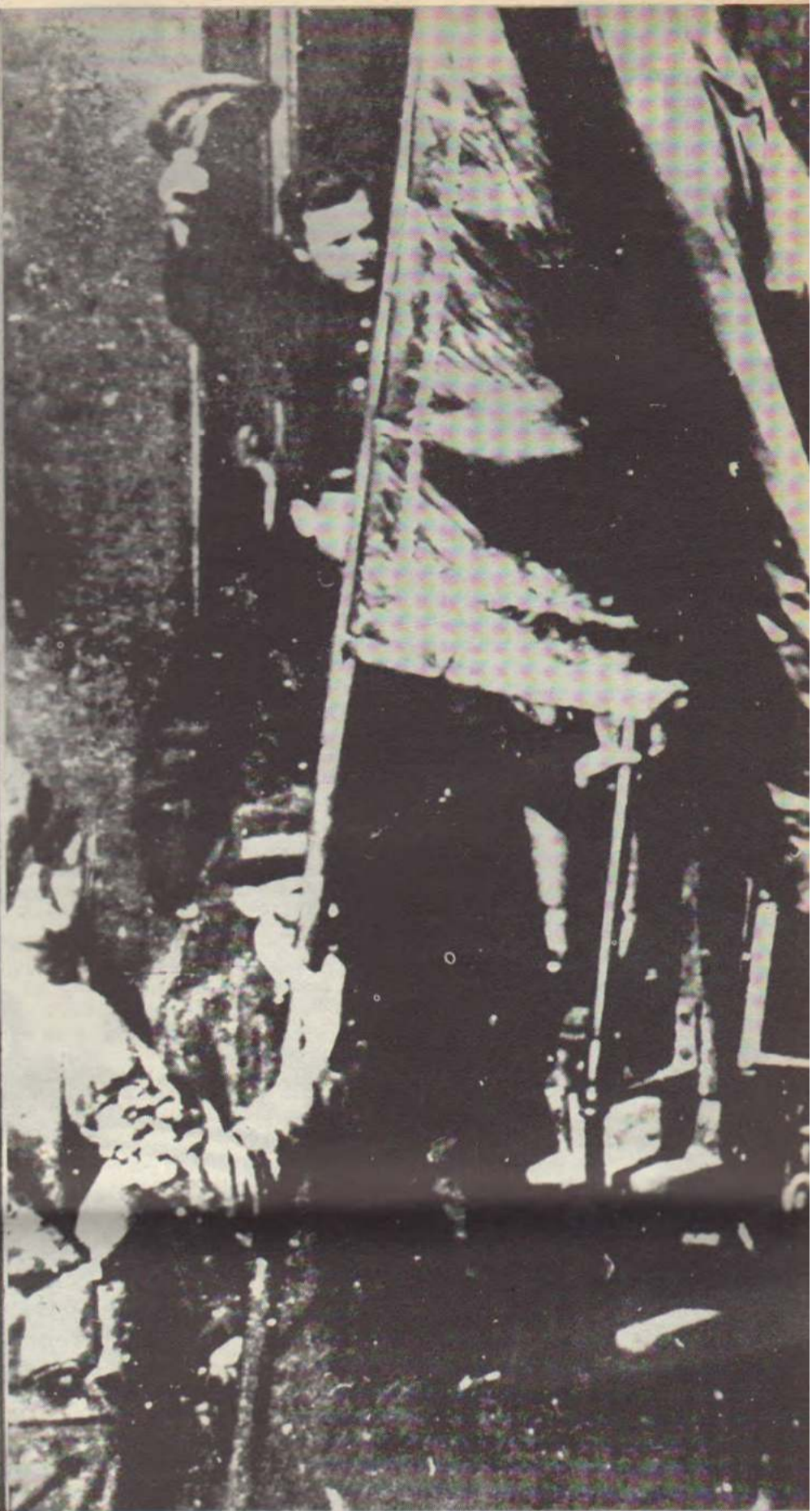
In the event of a drawn battle, they would, deriving their base from the war-weariness of the Catholic population, act as the new Treatyites.

The song quoted above was a satire, the SDLP takes it seriously.

The Red Mole



Special!



TROTSKY

a documentary

Five years ago, revolution and revolutionary politics were in. Actors, playwrights, journalists were switched on to Trotsky. Trotsky was seen as the antithesis of Stalin, the gravedigger of the revolution, and the cynicism, brutality and dogmatism which Stalin symbolised to them.

Today Trotsky is out. Indeed the latest fashion of the well-heeled trendy male is the assassin's outfit as modelled by Alain Delon in Losey's film on Trotsky.

Five years ago, the British working class was passive. The British trendies could identify with revolution . . . in France, in Vietnam and Latin America—the Che Guevara style was in. But Kings Road and Kensington W.14 were safe. Today, with the struggle in Ireland and the traumatic shock of the miners' strike, yesterday's trendy left has shed his thin skin—his fashions and his politics. The Gravedigger's hired assassin is their new model.

In this situation, Wyndham and King, who in their working lives cater for the whims of people in the top advertising bracket, could easily have capitulated to the pressures of this new mood. *They didn't.*

In these pages, Trotsky lives, warts and all—Kron-

his life to the construction of the revolutionary socialist movement, not Losey's nice old man who liked to tend his garden and his rabbits.

In his last breaths, he dictates in broken English to Joe Hansen, "I am sure . . . of the victory . . . of the Fourth International . . . Go forward . . ."

Those militants who are being gathered around the programme of the Fourth International in Britain are turning this understanding into a struggle to build the British Section of the International and its paper, *The Red Mole*.

Gery Lawless

Photographs reproduced here from *Trotsky, a Documentary*, by Francis Wyndham and David King published by Penguin Books at £1.50 in paperback and £3.00 hardback.

COVER: Trotsky at the height of his political power as founder of the Red Army. CENTRE SPREAD. Top left: L. D. Bronstein (Trotsky) aged 18. Top right: Trotsky on board his famous armoured train visiting the Western front in 1918. Right: The funeral of Dzerzhinsky in 1926. Trotsky and Stalin are carrying the front of the coffin.



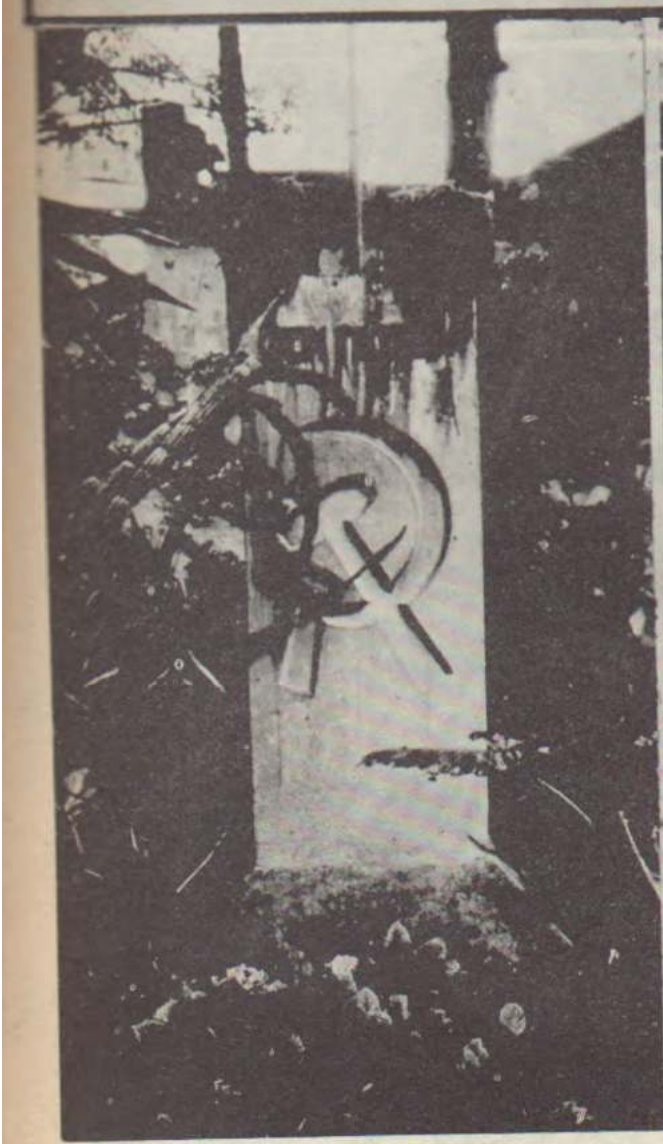


STALIN HAS MURDERED OUR COMRADE TROTSKY

Leon Trotsky has been murdered by the great boss of the Soviet Union, Joseph Stalin. The great boss of the Soviet Union, Joseph Stalin, has murdered Leon Trotsky. This is the truth. The great boss of the Soviet Union, Joseph Stalin, has murdered Leon Trotsky. This is the truth.

Farewell, Leon Trotsky---

There are many who believe that the great boss of the Soviet Union, Joseph Stalin, has murdered Leon Trotsky. This is the truth. The great boss of the Soviet Union, Joseph Stalin, has murdered Leon Trotsky. This is the truth.



Top: Trotsky dying in hospital after the assassination in August 1940. Inset: *Labor Action* printed the truth. Above left: Trotsky's grave in the garden of his house in Coyoacan in Mexico City.

PROVOS AND PROTESTANTS

Interview with Sean Mac Stiofain and Joe Cahill

Below we reprint the full text of an interview with Sean Mac Stiofain, Chief-of-Staff of the "Provisional" IRA, and Joe Cahill, former O/C of the Belfast Brigade, first published on 13 September in the Italian left-wing daily, *Lotta Continua*.

Note. Mac Stiofain's first language is now Irish; the interview was conducted in English, translated into Italian and then retranslated by us into English.

What is the present situation in the field?

Cahill. We are going from strength to strength. Our organisational structure is intact, and the supply lines are functioning notwithstanding the Nixon government's repression against our supporters in America.

Mac Stiofain. The choices of methods of struggle are dictated by tactical and strategic necessities, on both the military and political level. After the invasion of the Free Areas, which was meant to put an end to popular militancy and to the manoeuvrability of the Republican Army, we caused more losses to the enemy than in any past period. Firstly, the change-over to the use on a wide scale of anti-personnel and anti-transport mines which extended the struggle to the previously neglected countryside, forced the enemy to disperse his forces and faced him with a danger which is practically impossible to get rid of. Increased training and use of the sharpshooters has then been added to the mines. Twelve soldiers were shot in two weeks. At the same time we proportionally reduced the bombings and we have limited them to government and military installations. We don't want to run the risk of a high loss of life among the civilian population, even if the risk of this was provoked by the police and the army who didn't publicise our warnings. We are going through a delicate moment. Apart from the fact that by now the capitalist economic structure is almost completely destroyed, we realise that something is taking place among the protestant workers. We don't want to obstruct any kind of a process of radicalisation, increasing the economic difficulties of the protestant workers, by destroying factories and jobs.

The recent clashes between protestant workers and the English army have had the merit of revealing an objective contradiction between two counterposed classes, apart from all the mystification. What use does the IRA intend to make of this contradiction?

Cahill. We are watching these developments,

which we knew would come about sooner or later, with great interest. After all, don't the Shankill protestants live in the same misery as the Falls catholics? And have not the two communities the same exploiter? The truth had to come to light. However we have to proceed with great tact and caution. It's a big step forward that the protestants today talk about the Paras in the same way as the catholic workers did after the Derry massacre. But to step in straight away to gather the fruits of these developments would give the impression that we are cunningly trying to use the protestant workers as tools, and would only create diffidence.

Mac Stiofain. The English policy, digging its own grave, is now provoking a division between moderate protestants, who could be integrated into the English plans, and "extremist" workers, with the result that an increasingly strong proletarian component is emerging in the protestant organisations. Gusty Spence, head of the Ulster Volunteer Force, is already talking about working class revolt against the capitalist bosses who stand alongside the English. Spence has always said he is a socialist, however his methods were fascist: the OAS type murders of single catholics. Perhaps the man isn't to be trusted, but the fact that he talks like he does is a sign of rank and file pressure. At the moment, the protestant workers are anti-English in terms of being anti-nationalists, but in the meantime a front has been opened which, we hope, will continue to become more clear, until the protestants recognise where their real interests lie.

We intend to leave open all possible roads for a dialogue with the protestant forces.

Cahill. The protestant working masses are open to the idea of a New Ireland. They are very afraid of the tyranny of the Catholic Church as they see it in the South. And their fear is understandable. The Ireland which we should propose to them must include all the guarantees they need. Now this means to work to create an organisation with the more radicalised protestant workers. When we have built this then we will indeed have a people's war for national liberation against capitalist imperialism. As for Gusty Spence, it is true that his methods before his arrest in '66 were fascist. But the man has been a long time in prison alongside our militants. It seems that he has read quite a bit. Perhaps he has grown up. Prison teaches a lot of things, as both Sean and I have learnt.



Joe Cahill (left) and Sean Mac Stiofain

Mac Stiofain. The English can behave and plot how they like, but they remain bosses to the marrow of their bones, and they will never understand the people, and they can never foresee their reactions correctly. They continually make false steps. So the real interests come to light and the workers become aware of them.

There will be a conference of the Northern Ireland parties on the 25 September. What do you expect the outcome to be?

Mac Stiofain and Cahill. The results of the conference, perhaps not immediately, will be: the reconstruction of the Pro-Consular government of Stormont, which the people's struggle overthrew; a mixed government of moderate catholics and protestants; a police system controlled by the ruling classes of Dublin and London together; an inter-Ireland economic council, which will prepare the rationalisation of the industrial and agricultural economy of the whole island and its integration into the European Economic Community. These are the demands of the Unionist party, which has recently become more "moderate" and "realistic", in order not to be trodden on. The protestant workers reacted very angrily: Faulkner, the little Fuehrer, was stoned and kicked in Shankill Road. We oppose armed mass struggle to these plans, a struggle which provides an objective connection of interests even if it is for objectives that still seem

counterposed today with the protestant workers.

What is the attitude of the Eire government towards the IRA, after the Lynch-Heath meeting at Munich?

Mac Stiofain - Cahill. It is said that we have connections with the ruling circles in the South. I would then like to know why, if this connection still exists (certainly, who would have refused money and arms, when the battle began?), Lynch threw us into prison, and left the Official "marxists" in peace? The repression against us, coordinated between London and Belfast, gets worse every day. Heath gave Lynch a list of people who had to be put out of the way. The first victim was one of our top officers, Francis MacGuigan, the only guerrilla fighter ever to have escaped from Long Kesh, arrested the other day with two comrades. The fact is that the Dublin government is much more afraid of us than of the Official IRA opportunists, who unfortunately have the support of a lot of marxists, even sincere marxists, abroad, while the revolutionary groups, particularly the Fourth International, are all on our side. It is we who are fighting an armed struggle against capitalism, against clerical conservatism, against the manipulation of our economy by foreign capital, against their control of our means of distribution and production, which deprives, through wage slavery, the worker of the wealth which he produces.

I.M.G. LAUNCHES DRIVE FOR WEEKLY

The Red Mole

The Political Committee of the International Marxist Group, British Section of the Fourth International, decided at its meeting on October 21st to launch a national fund drive in order to prepare the way for a weekly newspaper. The Political Committee adopted a target of £10,000 to be raised within the next three months.

The capitalist press has started a witch-hunt against the Fourth International. Leaders of the organisation have been banned from many countries in the capitalist world.

But this campaign of lies shows that the bourgeoisie has begun to grasp an important truth: the tremendous potential power of the revolutionary forces when they are organised internationally. While the imperialist powers are increasingly split by rivalry, while the Social-Democrats and Stalinists are incapable of developing a unified international strategy, the revolutionary Marxist movement has been growing from strength to strength. The Fourth International has been in the forefront of the world movement in solidarity with the Indo-Chinese revolution since the very start of American intervention. Today, it alone has been able to develop a movement of international solidarity with the Irish struggle for self-determination. With the rise of working class struggle in Europe and the pressing need for an international response to the manoeuvres of capital, the existence of a rapidly growing revolutionary



organisation with forces in every country of capitalist Europe represents a great lever at the disposal of the workers' vanguard.

At the 9th World Congress of the International, the International Marxist Group became the

British section of the world movement. One of the youngest sections, it was created in the 1960s in the face of the degeneration of the traditional Trotskyist movement in this country. In spite of its rapid growth, the resources of the IMG are still woefully weak in the face of the enormous tasks and opportunities that confront the revolutionary workers' movement in Britain.

The sharpening class struggle makes it vital for the IMG to produce a weekly newspaper as a political weapon for militants in struggle. It also necessitates the transformation of our theoretical journal into a regular 56 page bimonthly.

We urge all militants, sympathisers and supporters of the Fourth International in Britain to contribute to the fund, thus helping to strengthen the intervention of the IMG at a crucial period in the class struggle.

Fill in this form and send to:— **FUND DRIVE, 182 Pentonville Road, London N.1.** (Cheques should be made out to **The Red Mole**).

I am enclosing £.....p..... for the Fund Drive

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

I know the following who may also wish to contribute:—

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

BOOKS

C.P. on Women

Women: The Road to Equality and Socialism, by Rosemary Small (Communist Party pamphlet, 10p).

During the early Sixties, a number of bourgeois sociologists wrote with enthusiasm of the democratic modern family based on love and equality of husband and wife, and increasingly strengthened by the welfare services of an essentially benevolent State. This picture was supposed to show a trend of inevitable progress and improvement in 'contemporary' (late capitalist) society. The development of the women's liberation movement challenged this cosy ideology of the family (just as economic crisis, and the rise in working class struggles, have shattered illusions about the 'affluent society').

IMPACT

So it is interesting to find that these ideas of continual progress and change appear to have had more impact on the writer of *Women: The Road to Equality and Socialism* than either the ideas of revolutionary Marxism or those which have developed around the women's liberation milieu. Rosemary Small gives tremendous emphasis to changes in attitudes: "To the much more equal relationship of today's young couples and their children" (page 13); "the significant change in men's attitudes towards sharing the work of the home" (page 11); and the changes of attitudes reflected in the Women's Institute's resolution in support of a comprehensive family planning service (page 16)!

Alongside this, of course, there is capitalism - which is a system based on profit, not need, and which continues to cause poverty, bad housing, insufficient nurseries and low rates of pay, especially for women.

KEY QUESTIONS

However key questions are ignored. What is the relationship between these apparently "significant" improvements and the development of capitalism? Why, nevertheless, are women still "second class citizens"? What is the relationship between capitalist exploitation and the oppression of women?

There is systematic evasion of any analysis of the family as the structure through which women are maintained in a situation of economic, social, sexual and psychological subordination within capitalist society. There is no analysis of the situation of women within the trade unions where male domination and lack of democracy have so often continued to perpetuate, rather than to challenge, women's inequality in work and in society. According to Rosemary Small, all that is necessary is that the unions should "examine their attitudes and policies" on women's issues more carefully.

STRATEGY

It is not surprising, therefore, that the strategy advanced for struggle against women's oppression is very restricted. It is aptly summarised in the advertisement at the end: "Come into the fight for women's liberation, join the Communist Party today."

Following the *British Road to Socialism*, this means joining with others to "win a system of government in Britain which will end capitalism for ever" (page 21 - our emphasis). Meanwhile, Communist Party policies "of immediate interest to women" consist of a list of reforms to be fought for now; these compromise with, rather than challenge, capitalist social relationships. (Thus the demand for nurseries ends "with extension of hours where possible to meet need" (our emphasis); and the demand for equal pay for work of equal value and a minimum wage of £20 is already T&GWU policy.)

BACKWARD

In many important respects the ideas outlined in this pamphlet are more backward than many of the ideas which have emerged from the women's liberation milieu, and certainly it has no perspective to offer in the debates which will be taken up at the coming national Women's Liberation conference. Nor does it provide the basis for any clearer understanding of the nature and significance of women's oppression which could be used to develop a strategy against the divisions between home and work, between male and female workers, which the ruling class continually exploit to their own advantage.

Margaret Coulson.

'From Rousseau to Lenin' - An Exchange

It is well known that the purpose of book reviews is to do the fullest possible justice to the views of the reviewer; if this can be achieved in agreement with the author of the volume reviewed, so much the better, and the ultimate reader may even gain some enlightenment. Comrade Mossgeil's review (*The Red Mole*, 52) of Colletti's *From Rousseau to Lenin* is centrally concerned with the "philosophical origins" of Engels' "revisions of Marxism" and "fatalism", which had the sad consequence of "turning Marxism into a sub variant of Darwin's theory of evolution", of leading Engels and the Second International along the road to parliamentary cretinism, and opening the way "for every possible crude brand of determinism, fatalism and any theory which justifies passivity". The source of Engels' delinquency was, according to Mossgeil, his resurrection of "the Hegelian idea of a 'Dialectic of Nature': i.e. his doctrine that matter exists independently of human consciousness and is governed by definite laws which are more accurately reflected in the laws of dialectical logic than those of formal logic. Engels thus brought about "a reconciliation" between (i.e. became an accomplice after the event of) classical materialism and Marxism.

Now, these are sweeping charges. It is not possible to reply in a brief space to an indictment so general, and so slimly supported by textual evidence. But what does Mossgeil propose as against a 'Dialectic of Nature' and its "crude determinism"? - Colletti's formula that "Both subject and object are part of an objective object-subject process", prefaced (p.10) by the remark that "the object only really becomes an object and hence something determinate through the contribution of both of these two modalities" (i.e. "the material and ideological levels"), which is not quoted by Mossgeil.

The meaning of this formula is relatively clear. A process is objective only if it includes a subject. Processes which do not include a subject to know them either do not exist or, at least, cannot meaningfully be discussed. Such a view is not Marx's, but has a more ancient (if not more respectable) lineage. It was Immanuel Kant - a German subjective idealist - who first advanced consistent arguments for the unknowability of the 'thing-in-itself', the object independent of the subject. Kant went on (as Mossgeil does not) to argue that faith is at least as reliable an avenue to truth as reason and observation, since without a universal subject to guarantee its objectivity, the external world and its laws would 'evaporate', philosophically speaking.

Thus Mossgeil's objections to a 'dialectic of nature' conceal a more general objection - to the independent existence of nature itself. Clearly, if nature in itself does not exist, it is misleading to argue about whether or not it is dialectical in character. Dialectics here receives the stricture that should properly be addressed to the substantial rump of materialism. If Comrade Mossgeil wants to deny the proposition (common to Marxism and 'classical' materialism) that nature exists independently of consciousness, he should present the arguments forthrightly, and deal with the whole gang of 'crude determinists', from Lucretius, through Diderot and Marx to Lenin, at one fell swoop. We await his stunning exposures.

Parallel to Mossgeil's and Colletti's scepticism as to the objective existence of nature goes a healthy anti-empiricism as to texts. The passage given from Engels' 1895 Introduction to *The Class Struggles in France*, quoted by Mossgeil as a "perfect combination of (Engels') Parliamentary illusions and fatalism (growing 'of itself') which lay at the heart of the ideas of the Second International", follows the falsified text published in Wilhelm Liebknecht's *Vorwärts* in 1895. To be sure Mossgeil here blithely follows Colletti, but he seems more than happy to use such a false passage to line Engels up as the philosophical and political inspirer of Bernstein and Kautsky. There is no other conclusion but that the roots of Bernstein's revisionism and Kautsky's betrayal in 1914 are to be found in Engels' "ambiguous legacy".

The unfalsified passage tells exactly the opposite story:

"We can count even today on two and a quarter million voters. If it continues in this fashion, by the end of the century we shall conquer the greater part of the middle strata of society, petty bourgeois and peasants, and grow into the decisive power in the land, before which all other powers will have to bow, whether they like it or not. To keep this growth going without interruption until it of itself gets beyond the control of the prevailing government system, not to fritter away this daily increasing shock force in advance guard fighting,

PUBLIC MEETING, Friday, 10 November, organised by London P.D. Main speakers: Mike Farrell, Bob Purdie. 8.00 p.m. at Conway Hall, Red Lion Sq. (Holborn tube).

UNIQUE XMAS PRESENT? Chinese choir, orchestra - 'The Internationale'. Long-play record, 33 rpm. 37p (post free) from: D.V., 16 Belmont Court, London N16 5QD.

SOUTH ASIA RED FORUM - a series of meetings to discuss the current problems relating to the anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist struggles in South Asia. Next meeting Tuesday, 7 Nov. - 'The Arab revolutionary struggles' (speaker: A.Said). Room 2D, University of London Union building, Malet Street, London W.C.1. For further details contact J. Singh, 27 Gap Road, London S.W.19.

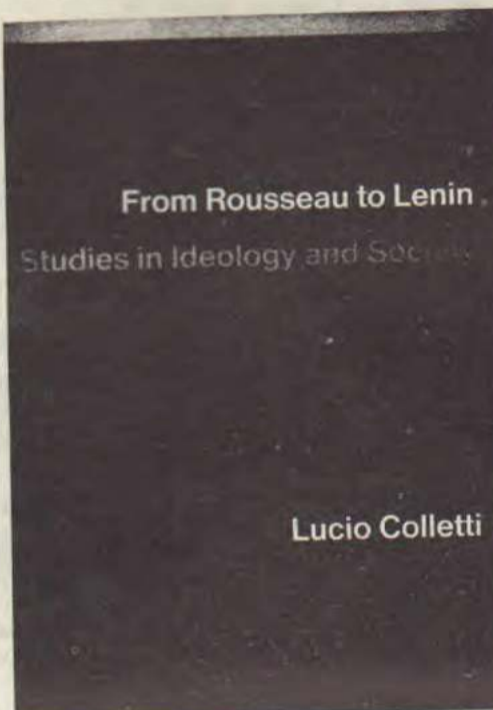
but to keep it intact until the day of the decision, that is our main task." (Karl Marx, Selected Writings Vol 2. p.189 ed C.P.Dutt, London, 1942: the passage omitted by Colletti is italicised)

Furthermore, Engels wrote in a letter to Lafargue on April 3, 1895:

"(Liebknecht) has played a pretty trick on me. From my Introduction to the articles about France of 1848-1850, he has taken everything which could serve to defend the tactics of peace and anti-violence; at all costs, which he has found it convenient to preach for some time past, especially at the present moment when the Exceptional Law is being prepared in Berlin. But I recommended these tactics only for the Germany of the present, and that too with essential reservations. In France, Belgium, Italy and Austria it is impossible to follow this tactic in its entirety and in Germany it can become unsuitable tomorrow."

Consigning Engels to the camp of revisionism is a serious matter. No assessment by Trotskyists of this giant of the labour movement should be based on corrupted texts, nor should it seek to find in their interstices a middle road between materialism and reformism or Kantianism.

Judith White



ROBERT MOSSGEIL replies: It was not the intention of the review to endorse current fashionable views, stemming from Lukacs' *History and Class Consciousness*, that in some sense Engels is profoundly anti-Marxist (See, for example, Hodges - *Engels' Contribution to Marxism*, Coulter - *Marxism and the Engels Paradox*). What was intended was to indicate that there are however certain really ambiguous points, some of which are noted by Colletti, in some of Engels' works, particularly those written after Marx's death, and it is pointless to try to conceal this. There is indeed nothing remarkable in this at all. The presentation of some holy quartet of Marx-Engels-Lenin-Trotsky in monolithic accord may satisfy a religious instinct but it has nothing to do with Marxism.

If we turn to Engels, the most serious point that comrade White makes is that about the falsified text of Engels. It was incorrect of me not to point out that this text Colletti quotes from was heavily edited by the SPD so as to 'tone it down'. However, unfortunately, the same ambiguities can be found in other texts of Engels. For example I am not sure that many people would wish to defend the formulation that "the democratic republic . . . is even the specific form for the dictatorship of the proletariat" (*Critique of the Erfurt Programme*, cited by Lenin in *State and Revolution*). Lenin tries to explain this as exemplifying "the fundamental idea which runs through all of Marx's works, namely, that the democratic republic is the nearest approach to the dictatorship of the proletariat". However I somehow think that 'is' and 'is the nearest approach to' do not really mean the same thing and that Lenin, in his desire to defend a great revolutionary, is trying to defend a quite unacceptable formulation.

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However as regards this general point, there is really no problem as no-one, not even Colletti, could think that Engels' work taken as an overwhelming whole, entertains parliamentarist illusions. Indeed the letter to Lafargue which comrade White cites shows this clearly not to be the case. However that unfortunately does not mean that every single word Engels, or Marx, or Lenin, or Trotsky, wrote is correct.

The most famous of all the points concerned with Engels is however that of the *Dialectics of Nature*. If all that was involved here was a question of the existence of the material world and a somewhat ill conceived problem of the 'laws of motion of thought' then everything would be relatively simple. Unfortunately however it is not with this at all that the problem lies.

Of course the material world exists independently of the subject but, by definition, what is known does not. It is for this reason that Lenin, who I am sure not even Comrade White thinks is an idealist, notes that "Cognition is the external, endless approximation of thought to the object" (*Collected Works*, vol. 38, p.195) In other words what is known is always different from the material world and, precisely because it is different, can in no sense be considered as the material world. In other words clearly the material world exists (the criteria for this being practice(s) and not a logical one) but this material world must be clearly demarcated from what we know. The material world of course is not a product of a 'subject-object process', but what is known precisely is, as Colletti notes, the results of such a process. Once it is noted that (a) what is known is logically distinct from the material world, and (b) what is known is always different from the material world, then the idea of 'reflection' as anything other than a statement that there exists some relation between what is known and what exists, the exact relation being determined by practice, becomes absolutely meaningless. Unfortunately none of these real problems appear to be understood in Comrade White's simple minded assertion that "matter exists independently of human consciousness and is governed by definite laws which are more accurately reflected in the laws of dialectical logic than in the laws of formal logic."

Furthermore, while Engels at least understands the problems, it is not possible to accept many of his conclusions. For example I trust not even comrade White wishes to defend either at an empirical level the text on "The Part Played by Nature in the Transition from Ape to Man", which goes against everything known about genetics, or at a more theoretical level all the stuff on water turning into steam as an example of quantity and quality, poles of the magnet as examples of negation, etc. (leave alone subsequent 'developments' such as oak trees growing from acorns through the 'negation of the negation' etc.) What is remarkable about all this is that it appears besides formulations such as "dialectical thought . . . presupposes investigation of the nature of concepts" (*Dialectics of Nature* - p.226), etc., which are not in line with this at all.

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BRITISH IMPERIALISM'S SILENT MANOEUVRES

Bob Slansky and Oliver MacDonald look at what lies behind the Yemen conflict.

The British press is trying to give the impression that nothing much is happening in the Arabian peninsula. The papers have been largely silent about the war between South and North Yemen. References to it have tried to suggest that it means nothing more than a border dispute, although some papers have taken the trouble to print North Yemeni propaganda releases claiming "South Yemeni aggression, mass bombings of villages and indiscriminate murder".

This screen of silence should not be taken to mean that the general staff of British imperialism is uninterested in the course and outcome of this apparently obscure dispute. The very opposite is the case. And socialists who take the struggle against British capitalism seriously must also take the trouble to unravel the complicated course of events in Arabia.

The region is of central economic and strategic importance for the Western powers by virtue of its vast oil resources in the North, along the Arab Gulf, and the sea route to the East through the Red Sea in the South. For more than a century Britain has been the dominant imperialist power in the area, and continues to hold sway. But since the early 1960s the Arab masses in the region have begun the struggle to rid themselves of imperialist exploitation. The three centres of this struggle have been North Yemen, South Yemen, and the Gulf area from Kuwait to Dhofar. The present war between North and South Yemen can only be understood by grasping the course of events in these three centres.

DEFEAT IN NORTH YEMEN

Following the overthrow of the reactionary emirate in North Yemen by Republican forces there was a civil war in that country for eight years. The Royalists would not have been able to wage this war without massive military assistance from Britain. £200 million worth of military hardware was provided by the British ruling class via Saudi Arabia. Even after the Egyptian army withdrew from the Republican side, the Republic held out against the Royalist forces, but a swing to the right in August 1968 led to reconciliation with Saudi Arabia and hence with the Royalists. Since that time the Arab Republic of Yemen has been ruled by a Republican-Royalist coalition heavily influenced by Saudi Arabia, the main bastion of reaction in the Arab world.

REVOLUTION IN SOUTH YEMEN

The masses in South Yemen were faced with a direct struggle against British imperialism's occupying forces and in 1967 they inflicted a humiliating defeat on the British in Aden. The struggle culminated in the establishment of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen. By its example to the rest of the Arab world, the establishment of the new Republic was a crucial blow against imperialism and those regimes in the Arab world which practise alliances with it. (It is as yet extremely difficult to characterise the social nature of the new Republic; in view of the weakness of the state apparatus one might more profitably view it as a 'liberated zone'.) More particularly, the South Yemeni Republic poses a big challenge to the North since its existence underlines the failure of the revolution in North Yemen. There are therefore plenty of forces in the region which would dearly like to see an end to the Southern regime. But for Britain and Saudi Arabia, the task of destroying the Republic of South Yemen is made a thousand times more urgent by developments in the Arabian Peninsula's third centre of revolutionary struggle — the Trucial



Youth train at the Lenin School organised by PFLOAG

states, Muscat and Oman along the Arab Gulf.

THE DHOFARI REVOLUTION

In June 1965, the struggle for the liberation of the Gulf was launched in Dhofar, the territory bordering the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen on its North Eastern side. The movement which began in Dhofar has had to confront daily attacks by the R.A.F., tribal divisions and innumerable other difficulties, but in spite of everything, it has won scores of military victories over Sultan Qabus's mercenaries and his British 'advisers'. The capital itself, Sallah, was for several weeks besieged and shelled by the revolutionary forces, and so far three quarters of Dhofar has been liberated. New popular administrations have been set up in all the liberated areas, freeing the populations from pre-feudal social conditions.

Responsibility for these astonishing achievements lies with the organisation leading the struggle, the Popular Front for the Liberation of the Occupied Arab Gulf. (PFLOAG). This organisation, one of the most advanced political formations in the Arab world, held its third congress in Rahout in June 1971 and adopted a programme defining its global strategy.

The following were the principal decisions of the Congress:

1. It set itself the strategic task of liberating the whole of the Gulf territories from Kuwait in the west to the Sultanate of Muscat and Oman (including Dhofar) in the East.
2. It adopted armed struggle as the only means of smashing imperialism and the feudal and bourgeois classes in the region.
3. It embraced scientific socialism as the Front's ideological basis.
4. It condemned Britain's phoney federation of the emirates along the Gulf, the fake independence of Bahrain, Qatar and Oman, and all the traditional political structures in the region.
5. The Congress called for the strengthening of ties with the revolutionary movements in other parts of the Arab East, and throughout the world.

THE IMPERIALIST RESPONSE

In the face of this revolutionary struggle led by PFLOAG, Britain, the United States and their allies, the local stooge regimes, are summoning all their resources to hold on to this vital economic and strategic centre. This has not been easy in view of Britain's earlier policy of ruling the area by stimulating rivalry and bickering between the various emirates. Nevertheless, the

British ruling class, helped by the Americans, have managed to patch up relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia, and between both these countries and the local emirates. Britain has even managed to win acceptance of its scheme for Federation along the Gulf. These are considerable achievements for imperialism, but remain preliminaries to the real task: the crushing of the mass anti-imperialist movement in the area, and particularly, the destruction of PFLOAG. And since the South Yemeni Republic acts as the base area and supply depot for PFLOAG, the guns of imperialism are being trained upon it as well.

After the reconciliation between North Yemen and Saudi Arabia, the latter is trying to impose by force of arms a similar solution in South Yemen, overthrowing the present rulers of that country. The Sana regime in the North has, therefore, started to allow attacks against South Yemen by the mercenaries of the former sultans of South Yemen and various other emigre riff-raff from that country. Over the last few years there have been continual skirmishes along the border, but Saudi Arabia is not at all satisfied and is seeking to provoke full scale war. Latest reports from South Yemen indicate that this objective is now closer to being realised than ever before. The leaders of the British ruling class are looking forward to this dirty piece of aggression with enthusiasm. This is the meaning of the latest border clashes.

SOLIDARITY

The Arab League has sent a commission to 'mediate' between the two sides — an extraordinary piece of hypocrisy, since Egypt's Sadat is directly implicated in the effort to overthrow the South Yemeni government (through financial aid to one of the emigre organisations attacking the South Yemeni border).

Meanwhile the Soviet Union, on which the South Yemeni government is increasingly dependent for aid, is pressuring it to cut off or drastically reduce its support for PFLOAG, while the Peking leadership has gone so far as to recognise Britain's Gulf Federation.

The only road forward for the South Yemeni revolution lies through the extension and victory of the struggle led by PFLOAG in Dhofar and throughout the Arab Gulf.

**HANDS OFF THE PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF SOUTH YEMEN!
VICTORY TO THE POPULAR FRONT FOR THE LIBERATION OF THE OCCUPIED ARAB GULF!
IMPERIALISM OUT OF THE ARAB GULF!**

Palestine Militants Fight Repression

By JUDITH WHITE

Palestine militants have been maintaining a hunger strike and vigil outside the West German Embassy in London since the banning of the Palestinian General Workers' Union and General Students' Union in West Germany on 4 October.

Even before this, during the month of September, over a thousand Arab residents of West Germany had been expelled and almost two thousand were refused entry. Under the pretext of 'security' measures since Munich, the West German government has been using laws on the statute book since 1965 which allow it to stifle political activity among the immigrant workers: some 10 per cent of the working class of the country.

Arab workers and students served with deportation orders have had precious little chance to appeal. The police generally come in the night, give them a few minutes to dress, and in a space of hours they find themselves on a plane, some of them even to Israeli-occupied Palestine or into the arms of the Jordanian police.

INTERNATIONAL SCALE

The witch-hunt against the Arab workers and students is now being carried on on an international scale — and not only by the right wing Zionists (see *The Red Mole*, 52) but by the imperialist governments too. The Nixon administration has announced that it is 'screening' all Arab residents or visitors to the U.S. Linda Jenness, presidential candidate of the Socialist Workers Party, says in a statement published in *The Militant*:

"Representatives of various Arab organisations in the U.S. have reported that FBI or other government agents have been following them around, holding them for interrogation, finger-printing them, and issuing threats of unspecified reprisals against them. Freedom of travel for all non-citizens, but especially Arabs, has been infringed, with the U.S. now requiring visas even for people simply stopping here to change planes in transit to some other country. All Arabs face special screening at airports These moves pose grave dangers for democratic rights in this country."

In West Germany and in the United States, the repression of Arab immigrants is just one aspect of the growing repression which the bourgeoisie is employing and will employ as its crisis deepens and the working class in these countries moves into new struggles. In West Germany, where immigrant workers are playing a major part in the developing struggles, the repression against the Arabs shows how bourgeois laws can be used to make the hidden dictatorship of the bourgeoisie more direct.

SOLIDARITY

International working class solidarity is necessary against these moves by the bourgeoisie to defend its interests. In Bonn, Palestinian students have been on hunger strike since the end of September, together with Iranian supporters. There have been further demonstrations in other West German cities; in New York, where a hunger strike was staged at the UN building; in all the major imperialist capitals; and in the Arab world (the West German embassy in Algiers was occupied).

ANTI-INTERNMENT LEAGUE Demonstration: Sunday, 12 November

Assemble Speakers Corner (Marble Arch) 2.00 p.m. March to Trafalgar Square.
**FREE ALL IRISH POLITICAL PRISONERS! BRITISH TROOPS OUT OF IRELAND NOW!
NO SPECIAL COURTS!**

The mask of Whitelaw's Direct Rule has been torn aside and has revealed plain clothes murder squads, rubber stamp detention, and political prisoners. The Darlington 'conference' showed Whitelaw's inability to gain support for his plans; the parties represented had the support of only a minority of the inhabitants of the Six Counties. The war is not over, the struggle continues.

The Anti-Internment League is today the movement which unites the largest number of individuals and organisations in Britain who support self-determination for the Irish people. The AIL is determined to take the Irish question back onto the streets of Britain; to raise a voice here against the British domination of Ireland. We call on Irish exiles, trade unionists, students, and all who believe that Ireland's British problem will only be solved through self-determination for the Irish people, to support us on 12 November.

SPEAKERS include: Bernadette Devlin, Michael Farrell, and Eamonn McCann



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Mugging With A Difference

The press, in particular the London evening papers, are at the moment running a big campaign against 'mugging' (robbery with violence). This campaign has included a vicious attack on Black youth, who are supposed to be centrally involved in this kind of activity. What is strange, however, is that the 'victims' in many of the incidents involving Black youth have turned out to be police officers!

On 18 February this year police attacked and brutally beat six Black people at Oval tube station for supposedly not having tickets. When found to have tickets they were charged with trying to rob a police officer whilst in the company of six other police officers. Subsequently they were found guilty in the courts and all were sent to prison.

On 16 March four young members of the Fasimbas (a South London black organisation) were returning home after attending a meeting in Haringey to co-ordinate defence activity for black militant Tony Soares. At the Oval tube station they were set upon by nine white men, whom they took to be a bunch of racist thugs. A fight followed, but when the police arrived it turned out that the group of white men were in fact plain-clothes Transport policemen. As a result the Black youths were confronted with a grand total of 17 charges, ranging from attempted theft, robbery and conspiracy to steal.

The four, who are pleading not guilty to all the charges, are now on trial at the Old Bailey. It is obvious that the prosecution is trying to cover up the real nature of the case by making it look like just another 'mugging', for which heavy sentences are now in order. As such it will also reinforce the present law and order campaign, which is designed to soften up 'public opinion' for an all out attack on the trade unions. Only by defending the victims of all such instances of repression can we, in fact, defend ourselves.

North London Poly: John Suddaby on

A VICTORY AND A MISTAKE

The Students' Union at North London Poly has inflicted a humiliating defeat on the college authorities. When the term began, business studies students found that Miller, the Principal, had suspended the head of their department, Mr. Jenkins. Miller had thrown together a list of charges, such as the fact that Jenkins had shown "pliability in the face of student opinion, and a willingness to lower standards in the interests of students". After a two week sit-in an emergency Governors' meeting was called on Monday 23 October. At this meeting Miller and the Chairman of the Board - a certain Roberts who edits the *Sunday Telegraph* - first tried to prevent the attendance of a national ATTI representative. They were out-voted. They then tried to stop a vote being taken on the issue of Jenkins' suspension. Their manoeuvres were defeated. Pressing on to make the suspension a point of honour, they found themselves in a 9-12 minority on a motion to re-instate Jenkins pending the results of an inquiry into the whole business. These two gentlemen are now, as they put it, "reconsidering their position".

The Poly's long history of struggle has produced a large revolutionary left within the union, whose executive is now led by the I.S. group. Last year, when the union claimed its right to full autonomy over its internal affairs, the college authorities froze the union funds. They remain frozen.

STRUGGLE

The struggle began spontaneously in the Business Studies Department with a three day strike for Jenkins' re-instatement. The issue was then taken up by the Union which

began an occupation of the Camden Town building under the two main demands of "re-instate Jenkins" and "immediately unfreeze union funds". The students' union action immediately threw the staff into a turmoil. Against the policy of their union, the ATTI, some staff went to meet Miller, while others picketed outside. The left got a strike motion through the ATTI in one building, but the right counter-attacked and the strike was voted out by ballot. Then a general meeting of the ATTI passed a motion that Jenkins should be re-instated without waiting for the results of an inquiry.

After one week, the union extended its occupation to a second building. Lectures there stopped and students moved out from it to other unoccupied buildings to organise teach-ins and general agitation.

Miller himself was on the defensive. He made a bid for the moderates by offering to negotiate "immediately" on the question of student union autonomy "or any other matter of common concern". His threats had to be covert: he issued a confidential letter to heads of department telling them to spread the rumour that the college would be shut down if the occupation continued.

But by this time the authorities had taken more than they could stomach and the Governors at their meeting re-instated Jenkins.

FLABBINESS

However the decisions of the Union meeting which took place on Tuesday 24 October, the day after Miller's defeat at the Governors' meeting, highlight what has been a continual theme of the struggle: the flabbiness of the Union executive's tactical line.

At Tuesday's Union meeting, the debate hinged around two alternative proposals: one from the IS lead executive, the core of which was: "Union notes the timely (sic) letter from the Director offering to negotiate with the Executive on the issue of funds and mandates the executive to negotiate with the Director and report back to the next General Meeting." The other motion, proposed by members of the International Marxist Group, argued that the union was quite prepared for negotiations with a committee of the court of governors including Miller, "with the proviso that prior to this Mr. Miller unfreezes the Union funds, and recognises the union as an autonomous body". The executive's motion was carried.

This decision is certainly a "timely" one for the college authorities. The Director found himself isolated on his own board of governors, with a substantial section of the staff against him, and with massive militant

opposition from the students. In this exposed position he was still in the position of trying to crush the Students' Union's autonomy by keeping the funds frozen. Of course, in a situation where the union has been badly defeated it may be necessary to retreat temporarily. But in the Poly, the union is in a politically very strong position with the authorities divided and isolated. And yet we have the I.S. offering Miller "timely" negotiations over the funds.

OPPORTUNISM

The answer of the IS leadership in the Poly has been twofold. First they insist that they have no intention of negotiating away the principle of student union autonomy and indeed had it written into the Executive's resolution. But then they say, we must recognise that the students want negotiations because they feel that Miller may be serious.

This is a dangerous muddle. Either the IS comrades want to genuinely negotiate on the funds, in which case they consider the question to be one for give and take rather than principle. Or they are trying to engage in a foolish trick: *pretending* to students that they are serious about negotiations, but behind the scenes refusing to take negotiations seriously. The only result of that will be for Miller to expose the executive as people who *educate* the students to take negotiations seriously and then just fool around at the negotiating table.

This opportunism appeared first during the summer vacation. The IS comrades on the executive agreed to enter negotiations over the question of the funds and autonomy at that time, on the grounds that the union was very weak and needed the money. It knocked around various 'compromise' formulae with the authorities and these will undoubtedly re-appear in the current negotiations. They then collaborated in an executive document explaining the situation at the college to the new students, which failed to prepare the students politically for the autonomy struggle, and even argued that there was no difference between the union's policy on autonomy and that of the NUS leadership!

The IMG issued a counter-report at the start of the term, and wrote a letter to the IS comrades privately criticising their opportunist line on the funds and autonomy (so far the IMG has received no reply). The question has now become a burning issue in the Students' Union which must be fought out in the coming weeks. With the victory in their grasp, the students' union has been led by the IS comrades into providing the authorities with a "timely" breathing space to re-group their forces for a counter-attack against the students.



Incident during 2000-strong anti-racist demonstration in Leicester last Saturday, 21 October. Only a dozen or so National Front members turned out in opposition despite threats of a counter-demonstration beforehand. (Photo: Paul Salvesson)

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N.G.A. STAYS ON REGISTER

By JOHN WATTS

A ballot vote by members of the National Graphical Association has decided that the union should remain registered under the Industrial Relations Act. The reason for this is the vacillation of Bonfield and other members of the National Council over the last year. This clinched the 2,000 vote victory for registration.

Bonfield put the matter like this: of course, everyone is against the Act; but, you see, there are problems: first a very complicated legal difficulty threatening the very existence of the union if it de-registered; secondly the enormous sums it stood to lose by de-registering. The union executive managed to overcome the problem of survival for a year, but there remained the money question, which became the executive's trump card.

A delegate meeting in Scarborough voted overwhelmingly to de-register and to campaign for this amongst the membership. But, as the mover had said in his speech, "I was beginning to come to the conclusion that he [the General Secretary, Bonfield] was speaking against the motion which is now up for discussion". What Bonfield had in fact done was to give delegates a paper with a list of grim financial possibilities facing the union if it de-registered. And this same list was to go out to the membership - "We dare not put out a ballot paper

which suppressed those figures", said the democratic Mr. Bonfield.

The General Secretary called his figures "Facts" but the real facts are that the National Council filled up three quarters of its circular with legal garbage and accountant's jargon. This material was put together in such a way as to pretend that de-registration would mean the end of the union. Then, tacked on to the end of the letter came the following: "Nevertheless, brothers, for the sake of the unity of the trade union movement, we recommend...etc."

One right-wing delegate had tried to back the manoeuvres of the Bonfield leadership by saying, "Let me quote Aneurin Bevan who said you do not walk naked into the Council Chamber. I say that you do not go into a fight naked". But what that delegate forgot and what Bonfield tried to obscure was this: when the working class must fight it must not walk into the council chamber of the enemy in the first place. And the whole purpose of the Act is to give trade unionists no place but the council chamber for the fight. The whole purpose of the Act is to strip the trade union movement naked so that it has to beg the employers for clothes. And the lesson from the NGA is the trade union bureaucracy, even in Mr. Bonfield's left-wing costume, cannot be relied upon to lead the struggle against the capitalist offensive.



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